Greenpeace South Asia
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Project Title	**Scoping Research: Clean Air Cities**
Type of Service Provided	Freelance
Period	May-July 2026
Duration	10-12 working days (8 hrs each)
Overview	**Air pollution** remains one of the most urgent public health and environmental challenges facing cities today. While policy and infrastructure interventions are often central to discussions on improving air quality, there is increasing recognition that meaningful change is also influenced by powerful social actors, including business leaders, celebrities, professionals, and high-net-worth individuals. This study forms part of the broader **Green Social Contract (GSC)** initiative, which explores how cities can become more just, inclusive, and liveable by reimagining the relationship between citizens, governments, and institutions. Within this framework, clean air is understood not merely as an environmental outcome, but as a **shared public good**. Achieving it therefore requires **collective responsibility**, **aligned incentives, and cooperation across different segments of society**. The study contributes to the GSC agenda in several important ways: ● It moves the conversation beyond purely technical or regulatory solutions by framing air pollution as a **collective social challenge** linked to public health, care, and equitable access to liveable urban environments. ● It closely aligns with the **urban mobility dimension** of the GSC. In many cities, improvements in air quality have been associated with investments in **public transport, walkability, cycling infrastructure, and reduced dependence on private vehicles.** Examining how these transitions gained public and political support can provide valuable lessons for shifting away from car-centric urban planning models. ● It creates space for a more deliberate discussion on **coalition-building**. When middle- and upper-income groups begin to view clean air and improved urban infrastructure as shared priorities, there is significant potential to align their social, economic, and political influence with the needs of communities disproportionately affected by pollution.
Deliverables	This study will consolidate and synthesise existing evidence from a **selected group of cities (4-6)** that have achieved measurable improvements in air quality. It will examine the **key drivers behind these changes**, with particular attention to the role of **influential social groups** - including business leaders, professionals, public figures, and high-net-worth individuals - in shaping policy, public discourse, and urban transitions.

	Rather than undertaking large-scale primary research, **the study will draw on existing literature**, case studies, and publicly available evidence to identify recurring patterns, knowledge gaps, and actionable insights relevant to future advocacy and coalition-building efforts. **Key Research Questions:** ● Which cities have successfully reduced air pollution, and to what extent? ● What were the primary drivers behind these improvements? ● Who were the influential actors involved in these contexts? ● In what ways did these actors contribute - through advocacy, role modelling, investment, public engagement, or political and economic influence? ● Did their involvement contribute to shifts in public perception, political momentum, or policy direction? ● What lessons and strategies can be adapted for other cities, particularly in the Global South? **Outputs:** 1. A concise **Synthesis Report**(maximum 20 pages) summarising the findings, to be shared internally by the end of July 2026. 2. **Supporting Annex** compiling relevant publicly available sources, references, and supporting materials used in the analysis. 3. A set of practical and strategic **Campaign-Relevant Insights** identifying potential entry points for mobilising influential groups in support of clean air initiatives and strengthened public transport systems. 4. A 90-minute **Internal Presentation and Discussion Session** to be held in August 2026, with the session recorded for internal use only. (Please note that the recording will not be shared externally outside of Greenpeace.)
Methodology	● Identification and selection **of 4-6 relevant global and regional case studies** demonstrating measurable improvements in air quality. ● A **desk-based review** of existing literature, policy documents, academic research, and credible datasets relevant to air pollution reduction and urban mobility transitions. ● **Selective key informant interviews**, where necessary, to address critical evidence gaps and provide additional contextual insights.